

From Neo-Classicism to Romanticism

Neo-Classicism, Age of Reason, Enlightenment (1660s-1770s)	Romanticism (1770s-1830s)
head	heart
reason	feeling, passion, imagination
humans as social beings (products of social order)	humans as natural beings (products of Nature)
respect for authority	questioning of authority, identification with and love of Nature
symmetry, balance, harmony	diagonals, dynamic motion
stability	challenge to status quo
hierarchy	democracy
universality	individualism, egocentrism
conformity, representative truths	eccentricity, idiosyncrasy
tradition	originality
decorum	rebellion against form
measure and proportion	intensity, excess
clarity, simplicity	mysticism, ornateness
restraint, self-restraint	indulgence of feeling
public, daytime orientation	private, night orientation; joys of solitude
rational sense to universe: patterns, laws, meaning	mysterious universe: hidden, dark forces, the supernatural
mechanistic world	organic world
present world	exotic and medieval subjects
real world	yearning for the infinite and the ideal
sensibility as moral force	
sense of the sublime	
melancholy musings	
	importance of childhood and the past
	impossibility of happy love
	Noble Savage
	Byronic hero
	Gothic world: morbid, forbidden impulses, animality, illicit forces
René Decartes, French philosopher. "Cogito ergo sum." ("I think: therefore I am.") <i>Discourse of Method</i> (1637).	Jean-Jacques Rousseau, French writer. "Exister, pour nous, c'est sentir: et notre sensibilité est incontestablement antérieure à notre raison." ("For us, existence is feeling: and our capacity to feel inarguably precedes our reason.") <i>Moral Letters</i> .